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What's Emerging from the Emergent Church?

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Jeffrey Jue, Assistant Professor of Church History at Westminster Theological Seminary, has written a thoughtful analysis of the Emergent church movement. "[What's Emerging in the Church?](#)" is published at [reformation21](#), the online magazine of the [Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals](#).

His aim: The purpose of this article is not to provide a comprehensive critique of the Emergent Church. Instead I would like to give a somewhat narrowly focused evaluation from the perspective of a historian and then offer some suggestions from church history to help address some of the concerns expressed by Emergent leaders. At first it may seem misplaced to invoke a primarily retrospective discipline while commenting on an extremely prospective movement. Moreover some readers might be anticipating a predictable traditionalist critique that eschews anything progressive. After all the Emergent Church, like all postmodern thinkers, is attempting to move beyond the past and discard the shackles of modernity. While many within this movement prefer to engage current issues or anticipate future challenges, the motivation for insisting upon a "new Christianity" is deeply historical.

More: What's emerging in the church? According to many Emergent leaders, something old and new. But without accurately understanding the old, the new lacks the rigor and depth which can only be achieved through years of testing and refinement. Meeting the challenges of our contemporary culture is not an easy task. We must have the humility to admit that we cannot meet this challenge alone. Thankfully we are not historically isolated. We have a rich history of theological reflections and writings from which to draw from.

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